

Remarks

Currently pending in the application are claims 14-18 and 21-28. Claims 14 and 26 have been amended to further distinguish Applicant's invention. Support for both amendments may be found at, for example, claim 20 and paragraph [0041] and the Examples of the published application. No new matter has been added.

Election/Restriction

Claims 14-28 are subject to a restriction requirement under 35 U.S.C. §§ 121 and 372. Applicant hereby elects, with traverse, for continued prosecution, Group I, claims 14-26 drawn to a composition containing nanoclays and epoxy resin.

Applicant elects with traverse because simultaneous examination of the inventions does not impose an undue burden of examination on the Examiner.

If the restriction requirement is made final, Applicant reserves the right to continue prosecution of non-elected inventions in one or more continuing applications.

35 U.S.C. § 103

The Examiner rejected claims 14-23 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Pinnavaia et al. (US 5,853,886). Applicant traverses this rejection for the following reasons.

Independent claim 14 is generally directed to a composition containing at least two separate reactive components wherein at least two of the reactive components contain nanoscale platelet fillers, with at least one of the nanoscale platelet fillers comprising alkyl ammonium ions on the surface.

In comparison, Pinnavaia teaches compositions containing clay in which the inorganic cations located in the galleries of the clay, such as. Na^+ or Ca^{2+} , have been exchanged with protons (*see, for e.g.*, US 5,853,886 at Fig 1A) and a polymer polymerizing component. Pinnavaia teaches away from the use of clays containing alkyl ammonium ions on its surface by expressly teaching that alkyl ammonium ions are absent from the clay (*see id.* at col. 5, l. 65 to col. 6, l. 12). Thus, Pinnavaia provides no teaching or suggestion to include in its inventive composition a nanoscale platelet filler comprising alkyl ammonium ions on the surface. Rather, such a proposed modification would render Pinnavaia's invention unsatisfactory for its intended purpose. Therefore, claim 14, and all claims depending on claim 14 are not obvious in view of Pinnavaia and Applicant respectfully requests this rejection be withdrawn.

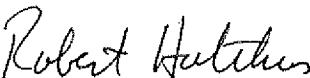
The Examiner has also rejected claims 24-26 as being unpatentable over Pinnavaia in view of Twardowska (WO 03/051282) or Zilg (US 6,197,849). The Examiner has added Twardowska and Zilg to Pinnavaia for the purpose of teaching the inclusion of fillers, such as calcium carbonate, talc, kaolin, silica or alumina, into polymer-clay composites. However, neither Twardowska nor Zilg teach or suggest a composition containing two reactive components where at least two of the reactive components contain nanoscale platelet fillers, with at least one of the nanoscale platelet fillers comprising alkyl ammonium ions on the surface as presently claimed. Thus, for all the reasons set forth above, neither Pinnavaia, Twardowska nor Zilg, alone or in combination, teach or suggest Applicant's claimed invention. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests the rejection to claims 24-26 be withdrawn.

Conclusion

It is respectfully submitted that claims 14-18 and 21-26 are patentable and are in a condition for allowance. Applicant respectfully requests these claims be allowed and that the application pass to issuance.

The Commissioner of Patents is hereby authorized to deduct any fee due in connection with the filing of this document from Huntsman Corporation Deposit Account No. 08-3442.

Respectfully Submitted,


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